

## BODHICITTA

English: mind of enlightenment (or) mind generation

Sanskrit: *Bodhicitta* ( *bodhi* = enlightenment , *citta* = mind)

Tibetan: 1. སེམ་ཀྱེ་བསྐྱེད། / *Sem kye* - mind generation ( *sem* = mind , *kye* = generation)

2. རྩ་ལྷུ་བ་སེམས། / *Jang chub Sem* - mind of enlightenment ( *jang chub* = enlightenment, *Sem* = mind)

The first of the ten topics that characterize the *exalted knower of aspects* is Bodhicitta (also called 'mind generation'). Three verses of the *Ornament* expound on Bodhicitta. Of these three verses the first one (verse 19) presents the definition of Bodhicitta:

*Mind generation is the wish for  
Complete enlightenment for the benefit of others.  
Just as in the sutra, the one and the other  
Are explained briefly and extensively. [19]*

The definition of **mind generation** or Bodhicitta is: a special mental main mind which is the entry way to the Mahayana path and is concomitant with its assistant aspiration **the** intense **wish** that focuses on **complete enlightenment for the benefit of others**.

**Just as the one** (the enlightenment aspiration) **and the other** (the other's benefit aspiration) are explained **in the** middling **sutra** (the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutra in Twenty Thousand Verses*) likewise they **are explained briefly and extensively** in the short sutra (the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutra in Eight Thousand Verses*) and the extensive sutra (the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutra in One Hundred Thousand Verses*).

The next two verses (verse 20 and 21) present one of Bodhicitta's categories - the category by way of similes - which consists of twenty-two different types of Bodhicitta.

*As for this: earth, gold, moon, fire,  
Treasure, jewel mine, ocean,  
Vajra, mountain, medicine, friend,  
Wish-fulfilling gem, sun, song [20]*

*King, store-house, great path,  
Riding mount, spring,  
Lute, river, and cloud.  
Thus, these are the twenty-two aspects [21]*

The meaning of these two verses is: **As for this**, the category by way of similes, there are twenty-one different types of Bodhicitta. **Earth**-like Bodhicitta, **gold**-like Bodhicitta, **moon**-like Bodhicitta, **fire**-like Bodhicitta, **treasure**-like Bodhicitta, **jewel mine**-like Bodhicitta, **ocean**-like Bodhicitta, **vajra**-like Bodhicitta, **mountain**-like Bodhicitta, **medicine**-like Bodhicitta, **friend**-like Bodhicitta, **wish-fulfilling gem**-like Bodhicitta, **sun**-like Bodhicitta, **song**-like Bodhicitta, **king**-like Bodhicitta, **store-house**-like Bodhicitta, **great path**-like Bodhicitta, **riding mount**-like Bodhicitta, **spring**-like Bodhicitta, **lute**-like Bodhicitta, **river**-like Bodhicitta, **cloud**-like Bodhicitta. **Thus, these are the twenty-two** different **aspects** of Bodhicitta.

[Bodhicitta was explained during the IBD philosophy course in the autumn of 2010 and spring 2011]

## PRACTICE INSTRUCTIONS

Tibetan: དམ་ཀྱང་གསུང་། - *Dam Ngag* (*Dam* = instruct/explain/teach/counsel, *Ngag* = speech/talk)

As explained before, Bodhicitta aspires to attain enlightenment and therefore, after having explained Bodhicitta, the question that arises is *how* to attain enlightenment. The only way to attain enlightenment

is to engage in extensive and prolonged practice of the Mahayana stages to full enlightenment which in turn must be preceded by listening, contemplating and meditating on Mahayana practice instructions.

Therefore, the *Ornament* explains ten different Mahayana practice instructions. Having explained Bodhicitta, the ten instructions assist Bodhisattvas on the path of accumulation (or those aspiring to become Bodhisattvas) to generate the qualities they have not generated yet and to not lose the qualities they have generated.

The ten practice instructions expound on ten topics. These ten topics are:

1. The two truths
2. The four noble truths
3. The three objects of refuge
4. Diligence/enthusiastic effort/perseverance of non-involvement
5. Diligence/enthusiastic effort/perseverance of tirelessness
6. Diligence/enthusiastic effort/perseverance of thoroughly applying oneself to the path of practice
7. Five visions
8. Six clairvoyances
9. Path of seeing
10. Path of meditation

The *Ornament* describes the ten topics of the ten Mahayana practice instructions in two verses:

*Practice, the truths,  
The three jewels such as the Buddha,  
Non-involvement, tirelessness,  
Thoroughly upholding the path, [22]*

*The five visions, clairvoyance's  
Six qualities and what are called "the paths of seeing  
And meditation": these practice instructions  
Should be known as having a tenfold character. [23]*

Bodhisattvas on the path of accumulation should now listen, contemplate and meditate on the Mahayana practice instructions. This will enhance their practice and their progress on the path to enlightenment.

**These practice instructions should be known as having a tenfold character** since they describe the following ten topics:

1. The two truths: the two truths are explained in order to understand the nature and the aspect of **practice**
2. The four noble truths: **the four noble truths** are the focal object of practice
3. The three objects of refuge: going for refuge to **the three jewels such as the Buddha** and so forth serves as the basis of one's practice
4. The diligence of non-involvement: the diligence of **non-involvement** counteracts the laziness of engaging in non-virtuous actions and assists practitioners in stabilizing their practice
5. The diligence of tirelessness: the diligence of **tirelessness** counteracts the laziness of sloth/procrastination and assists practitioners in increasing their practice
6. The diligence of thoroughly upholding the path of practice: the diligence of **thoroughly upholding the path** of practice counteracts the laziness of self-contempt/faintheartedness and assists practitioners in averting the deterioration of their practice
7. The five visions: **the five visions** are special powers that practitioners need in order to become more self-sufficient
8. The six clairvoyances: **clairvoyance's six qualities**, i.e. the six types of clairvoyance, are needed in order to quickly complete the accumulation of merit
9. The path of seeing: practitioners on the **path of seeing** have newly cultivated the meditative absorption directly realizing emptiness. The principal function of this meditative absorption is to permanently eliminate the *intellectually acquired* ignorance etc.
10. The path of meditation: practitioners on the **path of meditation** have achieved the cessation of the intellectually acquired ignorance etc. and their meditative absorption directly realizing emptiness now eliminates the *innate* ignorance etc.